ABSTRACT

Previous data and present data using a specimen are matched with a group of reference patterns by a pattern matching unit (304). Through the pattern matching, most
5   approximate reference patterns in the group of reference patterns are selected. A distance calculator (305) calculates a distance d between the selected two reference patterns A and B. A determining unit (306) compares the distance d with a threshold, and displays that a re-
10 examination of a specimen is necessary before previous-value checking, when the distance d is greater than the threshold.